

ABAG/CALFED Task Force Water Management Committee Meeting
Meeting Minutes. May 14, 2002
Oakland, California 10 a.m. – noon

Chair: Jennifer Krebs, ABAG Senior Environmental Planner

Attendance roster, attached.

Final agenda and minutes of the last meeting were distributed. A brief information exchange followed:

Amy Fowler of the S. Clara Valley Water District reported that the consultant selection process for the new Bay Area Water Agencies Coalition had narrowed to one. Coalition approval of the consultant and final scope of work is expected within the next several weeks. Mary Selkirk encouraged an ongoing exchange of information.

[Information exchange to resume after ABAG Smart Growth presentation.]

Victoria Eisen, principal planner with the ABAG Smart Growth Strategy Regional Livability Footprint Project, provided a brief Power Point presentation to the committee members (printout of Power Point presentation, attached). The project is nearing completion of its extensive public outreach and involvement process.

Victoria invited contributions of ideas from the Committee members. Water management ideas fit nicely into the regulatory changes segment of the Smart Growth planning effort. These implementation concepts will go forward to the legislature.

Mary Selkirk suggested that the Sacramento area land use agencies' regional water budget development effort could provide a model for the Bay Region. Planners discovered in an earlier study that lot size proved to be a more reliable predictor of water use than variations in sub-climates.

Members of the Committee from the Peninsula apprised the other members that growth versus stasis is still a large local issue. Questions were raised about community-wide representation at the Smart Growth workshops. Water and land use planning doesn't necessarily reflect the man on the street's concerns. Staff remarked that the outreach and participation levels were very high and a balanced group for discussion and deliberation was encouraged.

CALFED staff indicated that new state legislation raises the stakes on the relationship between land use planning and development and water management.

Committee members discussed some of the complexities of the water/land use dialogue. Water consumption rates will be strongly influenced by any new development footprint for the regions. Thus far the location issue has been the focus of discussions, but this is more complex than describing new piping and storage facilities, or recycling options. Detailed analyses about future

housing and transportation needs are driving the preferred alternative selection. But water is a major, overlooked factor. How might the choice of preferred alternatives change if water is factored into the discussion and debate?

Water agency representatives remarked that the Smart Growth project's preferred planning alternative could be evaluated against practical water delivery concerns. A sub-regional approach might emerge. In some areas, agricultural lands need to have their own water needs analysis.

Victoria Eisen described the early planning reconnaissance effort of 2.5 years ago. These discussions reflected concerns about water, but the county level data have been difficult to ascertain.

Members indicated that watershed protection and wastewater planning, along with various funding scenarios, should be considered along side water supply and demand scenarios. Communities can no longer assume that increased bonded indebtedness will provide the funding necessary to improve waterworks. Water districts are typically stuck with planning outcomes. A front end analysis helps districts plan for water storage and delivery. Concern was expressed that the regional planning train may have left the station without water management as an integral planning element. Water demands and supply issues need to be fully integrated into the smart growth analysis in all three regional planning scenarios. A county by county analysis can benefit state legislators. Some urban water management plans now go beyond the base case population projections for the region, so some analysis and output is now possible. Projections of water use by census tract are not yet available. This type of analysis also does not take into account visiting (commuter) populations. City-level housing and job data could be a starting point. ABAG could supply these data to water districts in order to get back demand projections. Alternatively, planning unit data could be used. Which data sets can ABAG supply? Kearey Smith asked committee members to be specific about their data needs, to facilitate a mapping and data evaluation process.

Action Items :

Members of the Committee from the Peninsula – Mayor Ira Ruskin (Redwood City), and Vice Mayor Dena Mossar (Palo Alto) – would like to see a letter from the Committee and the Task Force go to the President of ABAG, indicating that there is an incomplete smart growth analysis. Members are willing to help draft it. Jennifer Krebs will work with Victoria on a draft piece of Committee correspondence that reflects member concerns and ideas.

Information sharing resumes: SCVWD district handed out a flyer about its upcoming workshop. CALFED staff reported on funding developments. The Dept. of Finance is committed to contract issuance, and the staff attorney has approved it. It will require two additional layers of review. Expect, however, to see cuts in the CALFED budget overall.

Kearey Smith provided extra copies of water district correspondence and survey maps agreed upon at the last meeting. Distribution by mail has occurred, and electronic distribution will be expanded to the Santa Clara Valley Water District. The difficulty of integrating retail and

wholesale water supplies on one map was discussed. Kearey Smith invited members of the committee to communicate their ideas to him. A summer intern will come on board to assist with integrating projections of growth with retail service area boundaries.

Hard copies of the CALFED framework report are available in addition to the web site version. The Evaluation Framework agenda item will be carried forward to the June 21st meeting of the Water Management Committee.

July 29th is the next CALFED Task Force meeting.

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